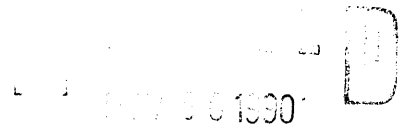


NPS Form 10-900
(Rev. 8-86)

OMB No. 1024-0018

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

NATIONAL
REGISTER

1. Name of Property

historic name: Thomas, Robert, House

other name/site number: MUC-3

2. Location

street & number: 516 Broad Street

not for publication: N/A

city/town: Central City vicinity: N/A

state: KY county: Muhlenberg code: 177 zip code: 42330

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: Private

Category of Property: Building

Number of Resources within Property:

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

Name of related multiple property listing: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official: David L. Morgan Date: 10-24-90

David L. Morgan, State Historic Preservation Officer, KY Heritage Council State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register See continuation sheet.
determined eligible for the National Register See continuation sheet.
determined not eligible for the National Register
removed from the National Register
other (explain):

Entered in the National Register

Signature of Keeper: Melissa Byrum Date: 12/6/90

Signature of Keeper Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic: DOMESTIC Sub: Single Dwelling

Current : DOMESTIC Sub: Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification:Dutch Colonial Revival

Other Description: N/AMaterials: foundation Brick roof Asphalt
walls Weatherboard other ConcreteDescribe present and historic physical appearance. X See continuation sheet.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties: Local.Applicable National Register Criteria: B and CCriteria Considerations (Exceptions) : N/AAreas of Significance: ARCHITECTURE
POLITICS/GOVERNMENT

Period(s) of Significance: 1904; 1904 - 1917; ca. 1920Significant Dates : 1904Significant Person(s): Thomas, Robert Young, Jr.

Cultural Affiliation: N/AArchitect/Builder: Unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.
X See continuation sheet.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other -- Specify Repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 3.5 acres

UTM References: Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

A	16	489485	4127505	B	_____	_____
C	_____	_____	_____	D	_____	_____

Central City East Quad _____ See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description: See continuation sheet.

Boundary Justification: See continuation sheet.

11. Form Prepared By

Name/Title: Jane Laub, Philip Thomason
Organization: Thomason and Associates Date: April 30, 1990
Street & Number: P.O. Box 121225 Telephone: (615) 383-0227
City or Town: Nashville State: TN ZIP: 37212

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section number 7

Thomas, Robert, House
Muhlenberg Co., KY Page 1

The Robert Thomas House (MUC-3) is a two-story, frame dwelling with Dutch Colonial Revival influences located at 516 Broad Street in Central City, Kentucky (pop. 5,400). The house is situated on a rectangular lot in a residential neighborhood at the southwest corner of Board and Sixth Streets. The house, erected in 1904, retains a high degree of integrity and is the only existing example of the Dutch Colonial Revival style in Central City.

The house was originally built for display as a model home for the 1899 World's Fair in St. Louis. Robert Young Thomas, Jr., and his family attended the World's Fair and, impressed with the model homes, made arrangements to buy three of them. After the Fair was over they were dismantled and brought to Central City where they were reconstructed. The house rebuilt on Broad Street was the "nicest of the three," according to the reminiscences of Taylor's friend and colleague Judge Arthur Iler. This residence was occupied by the Taylor family from 1904 to 1917.

The exterior has not been significantly altered since its construction. A porch enclosure on the back side of the house is the only major exterior renovation. The house was built in an ell plan, and rests on a continuous brick foundation. It features a brick basement and an unfinished attic. The cross-gambrel/gable combination roof with wide overhanging eaves is covered with asphalt shingles. The house has two internal chimneys, one positioned on the east end and the other centrally located. Decorative attic vents are positioned under the ridge on each gable or gambrel end. The exterior is the original weatherboard with corner boards, and features a continuous wide wood belt course just above the foundation around the front and sides of the house. Windows and doors feature plain rectilinear wood molding surrounds, with the majority of windows covered with modern aluminum-and-glass storm windows.

The main (north) facade features three bays with a central entrance, original ten-over-one double-hung sash windows on the first floor, and original paired six-over-six double-hung sash windows on the second. The entrance consists of the original multi-light wood door with sidelights and a multi-light transom. A modern aluminum and glass storm door has been added. An open veranda with a wood plank floor is located on the north facade and wraps around the west facade of the house. Slender Tuscan columns support a plain architrave and at the roof of the porch is a frame balustrade. This balustrade has square balusters and the sections of railing are connected by frame piers covered with asbestos

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Muhlenberg Co., KY

Section number 7

Robert Thomas House Page # 2

siding to resemble brick. Three concrete steps lead to the veranda from a concrete sidewalk.

The projecting bay on the main facade of the house features a front gable end with flared eaves, and half-timbering. The boxed eaves form a center pointed arch above the upper story paired windows. A second floor entrance on the west facade of this projecting bay opens onto the balcony. This door is of original glass and wood design and has a modern aluminum and glass storm door. The main facade also features a projecting gambrel dormer with wide overhanging eaves and a small diamond shaped vent window.

On the east facade are nine-over-nine and two original horizontally divided three-over-three double-hung sash windows on the upper floor, and original nine-over-nine double-hung sash windows on the first floor. An original door opening on this facade remains but has been enclosed with a wood louvered door and the original staircase removed.

On the rear or south facade is an original shed dormer with original single and paired six-over-six double-hung sash windows. A multi-light glass and wood door opens from the shed dormer to the roof of the porch. The rear facade also features a one-story shed porch with square posts. This porch was partially framed in on the east bay and the remainder of the porch was enclosed with wood and screen panels ca. 1923. The porch is supported by square brick pillars and covered with a flat asphalt shingle roof. Wood steps with metal handrails lead to the porch from the back yard. Located under the screened porch is the exterior basement entrance with an original four-panel wood door, flanked by three multi-light fixed windows. A coal chute remains in the foundation wall next to the basement window on this facade.

A porte-cochere extends over the concrete driveway on the west facade of the house. Single and paired slender Tuscan columns support the hipped roof and balustraded balcony over the porte-cochere. Columns on the west facade of the porte-cochere rest on a poured concrete base scored to resemble stone. Wood steps with a center metal handrail lead from the porte-cochere to a secondary entrance on the west facade. This entrance has paired multi-light glass and wood doors. To the south of this entrance on the first floor of the west facade are one-over-one and two-over-two windows added ca. 1956. The second story of the west facade has

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Muhlenberg Co., KY

Section number 7

Robert Thomas House Page # 3

three nine-over-nine double-hung sash windows and a small four-over-four double-hung sash window in the north bay.

The interior of the dwelling has not been significantly altered since its construction. The house retains its original four and five-panel wood doors, baseboards, hardwood floors, plaster walls, hot water radiators, and simple rectilinear wood molding around doors and windows. The first floor contains an entrance hall with a divided staircase featuring two landings to the second floor. A service staircase descends from the second landing to the kitchen area. The staircase railing features original ornate millwork between vertical fluted balusters and a large fluted newel post. All balusters and newel posts feature a full round ball-like cap. From the entrance hall original double multi-light doors lead to a formal dining room. The fireplace in the dining room has been altered in recent decades with a stone veneer and ceramic tile hearth. The dining room leads to a modern kitchen.

The first floor parlor features an original ornately detailed wood fireplace mantle and a ceramic tile hearth. Built-in bookshelves, installed ca. 1940, replaced the original French doors that led into the living room from the parlor. The original living room, including a small alcove, is now used as a bedroom and study. The alcove, which serves as the study, is separated from the bedroom by a wide full-height arched opening. The second floor has four bedrooms which open onto a central hallway. Doors feature the original plain rectilinear wood molding surrounds with bulls-eye corner blocks.

One outbuilding, a garage with a rear apartment, is located to the southwest of the dwelling. This ca. 1920 frame garage has not been altered and has weatherboard siding, a gable roof of asphalt shingles, an interior brick flue, and a poured concrete foundation. The garage was built in a gable front design with two bays on the main (north) facade. The garage features a gable front porch on the main facade with tapered frame posts resting on rock faced hollow-core concrete block piers. The original garage doors remain and are of vertical board with diagonal supports. The upper sections of the doors have windows of four light vertical design.

The east facade of the garage features an original one-over-one double-hung sash window and a three-panel glass and wood door. This entrance has a small entry porch with a frame shed canopy supported by two wood

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Muhlenberg Co., KY

Section number 7 Robert Thomas House Page # 4

posts. The south and west facades both feature original four-light fixed basement windows and original one-over-one double-hung sash windows on the main floor. The interior of the building has not been altered and features a concrete floor in the garage and wood floor and plaster walls in the apartment area.

A ca. 1904 concrete carriage step is located on the main facade of the house between the sidewalk and the street. This carriage step is original to the house and is included as a contributing object to the property.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Muhlenberg Co., KY

Section number 8 Robert Thomas House Page # 1

The Robert Thomas House (MUC-3), located in Central City, Kentucky is significant under criteria B and C for its architectural design and association with prominent politician Robert Y. Thomas. The house is the only example of the Dutch Colonial style in Central City and retains its original design and detailing. The house was also the residence of Robert Y. Thomas who was Central City's only politician to serve in the U.S. Congress. Thomas and his family occupied the house from 1904 to 1917.

The Robert Thomas House retains its original architectural design and is the only high style Colonial Revival residence in Central City. The residence displays the influence of the Dutch Colonial revival in its gambrel roof, Tuscan columns, and half-timbering. No major changes have occurred to the exterior and interior of the residence and the property also retains an fine example of an early 20th century garage and carriage step. The residence is the only extant building of the three moved to Central City from the Louisiana Purchase Exposition by the Thomas family in 1904.

In addition to its architectural significance the residence is the only building in Central City associated with politician Robert Thomas. Thomas was born in Logan County, Kentucky on July 13, 1855. By the time he was six years old, his parents moved the family to "that progressive community," Stroud City, which was later known as Central City. He was sent to the common schools as a boy, and received an A.B. degree from Bethel College in Russellville, Kentucky in 1878. He completed a master's degree from Bethel and admitted to the bar in 1881. He began his law practice in Central City and entered the newspaper business starting papers in Caseyville and Russellville. He eventually gave up journalism, but not before founding another newspaper, the Central City Herald in 1889.

Thomas used his law and journalism experience to enter politics. He was first elected in 1885 to the Kentucky Legislature for a two year term. After assembling a statewide political base, Thomas was elected as Commonwealth Attorney in 1903. At the turn of the century, Thomas married Annie Barber, a widow from Texas. The marriage produced two daughters and a son, and Mrs. Thomas had one daughter by a previous marriage. In 1904, the Thomas family attended the Louisiana Purchase Exposition in St. Louis. Thomas was so impressed with the model homes on display that he made arrangements to buy three of them. After the fair

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Muhlenberg Co., KY

Section number 8 Robert Thomas House Page # 2

ended they were dismantled in sections and brought to Central City by barge on the Mississippi, Ohio, and Green Rivers, and the family occupied the house at 516 Broad Street by late 1904.

Over the next several years the Thomases were known for their sumptuous parties and the house became one of the social centers of Central City. The Thomas marriage was stormy, however, and within a few years Mrs. Thomas and the children left for Texas, where she obtained a divorce. Thomas continued to serve as Commonwealth Attorney until 1909, at which time he resigned to take a seat in the Congress of the United States. He served as a Democrat in the 61st and in the eight succeeding Congresses from March 4, 1909 until his death in 1925. Thomas was the fourth from the county of Muhlenberg to become a congressman, but the only elected congressman from Central City. Thomas continued to reside at his residence on Broad Street while he served in Congress. Due to financial setbacks resulting from the divorce and business ventures, Thomas sold the house in 1917 to J.A. Smith. Following the sale of his residence Thomas is believed to have resided in apartments in Central City and Washington until his death.

Thomas was elected as a Democrat and was a prominent figure in Washington. Thomas voted the Democrat party line and was successful in increasing federal funds for his district. It was through the effort of Thomas that \$7,500 was secured in 1915 to purchase the lot on which the present Central City Post Office was built in 1931. Thomas was well known for his colorful language and his vehemence in the cause he was supporting. He was described as courageous, unique, honest, intelligent, successful, brash, witty, a staunch friend and an implacable enemy. Rothert's History of Muhlenberg County cites him as "one of the best known men in the Green River country." Thomas died while a member of Congress on September 3, 1925 at Red Boiling Springs, Tennessee.

James A. Smith purchased the house in 1917 and he was a well known coal mine operator for many years. After the purchase of the property, Smith built the rear garage ca. 1920. This garage is an excellent example of a Bungalow style, readi-cut outbuilding of the period and reflects the shift to automobile transportation after World War I. Its Bungalow design follows stylistic trends of the early 1920s and is included as a contributing building to the property. Following Smith's death the house became the property of Charles Smith and his family continues to own and occupy the house. No major changes have occurred to the residence and it continues to display the majority of its original interior and exterior design and detailing.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Muhlenberg Co., KY

Section number 9

Robert Thomas House Page #1

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(8-86)

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Muhlenberg Co., KY

Section number 10

Robert Thomas House Page #1

Verbal Boundary Description:

The boundary for the Robert Thomas House includes all of lot 031 of block 30 on Muhlenberg County tax map 141-2 which is drawn at a scale of 1" = 200'.

Verbal Boundary Justification:

The boundary for the Robert Thomas House includes the entire lot which has historically been associated with the property.

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Muhlenberg Co., KY

Section number ___Photos___

Robert Thomas House Page #1

Robert Thomas House
516 Broad Street
Central City
Muhlenberg County, Kentucky
Photo by: Thomason and Associates
Date: April 2, 1990

- Photo # 1 of 9: North facade, view towards south.
- Photo # 2 of 9: East and south facades, view towards northwest.
- Photo # 3 of 9: South and west facades, view towards northeast.
- Photo # 4 of 9: North and west facades, view towards southeast.
- Photo # 5 of 9: Interior, view of staircase.
- Photo # 6 of 9: Interior, view of first floor bedroom.
- Photo # 7 of 9: Interior, view of first floor door.
- Photo # 8 of 9: Garage, view towards southeast.
- Photo # 9 of 9: Concrete carriage step at sidewalk on north facade.